Field Ops Div. East



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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October 30, 1979

A. W. Ownbey, Captain
L.A. County Sheriff's Department
Homicide Bureau
Hall of Justice
211 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Captain Ownbey:

In re Our Case No. 100-2245
Your File No. 079-10888-0286-055

Our office has completed its investigation of the shooting of Jack Viny Youngs by Sergeant Michael Aranda, #[redacted], on July 17, 1979. Our investigation has included a review of the following reports: a four (4) page complaint report dated July 16, 1979 by Deputies P. Sylvia, #[redacted], and S. Jones, #[redacted]; a two (2) page supplementary report dated July 18, 1979 by Sgt. D. Kushner, #[redacted]; a one (1) page supplementary report dated July 18, 1979 by Sgt. B. Haney, #[redacted]; a three (3) page supplementary report dated July 17, 1979 by Deputies P. Sylvia, #[redacted] and S. Jones, #[redacted]; a four (4) page supplementary report dated July 29, 1979 by Sgt. David B. Kushner, #[redacted]; a nine (9) page transcript of the recorded statement of Sammy Lee Jones recorded on July 18, 1979; a six (6) page transcript of the recorded statement of Michael Aranda recorded on July 18, 1979; a nine (9) page transcript of the recorded statement of Jack Viny Youngs, Jr. recorded on July 18, 1979. No further investigation is necessary for our decision.

On July 18, 1979 at approximately 10:00 p.m., uniformed Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputies Sammy Lee Jones and Paul Sylvia were on duty conducting a grand theft and petty theft investigation at an apartment located at [redacted] Olympic Boulevard in East Los Angeles. The deputies, based on information received from the victims of the alleged crimes, believed that

the apartment was occupied by the suspect Jack Youngs. The suspect was described as about 5'11", 200 lbs., estimated age to be 30 to 35 years. The deputies intended to arrest Mr. Youngs. Sgt. Aranda arrived at the location just as the deputies approached the suspect's apartment. Sgt. Aranda, who was alone and in uniform, remained as a back-up to cover the rear exit of the building to prevent escape.

The deputies walked up a stairway to the door of the suspect's apartment and knocked on the door. From within the apartment someone said, "Who is it?" One of the deputies replied, "Deputy Sheriff." The deputy further called the suspect by his name. Receiving no further response the deputies looked inside the apartment and saw Mr. Jack Youngs rummaging through drawers in a bedroom. At this time Mr. Youngs was advised that if he would not open the door, it would be opened for him. Mr. Youngs then stated, "Come in and get me." Following this statement Deputy Jones proceeded downstairs to request additional units for back-up. Deputy Sylvia remained at the front door of the apartment but did not see Mr. Youngs again till Youngs' arrest later on that evening.

Sgt. Aranda was advised by Deputy Jones of the observations of the deputies and the events that occurred at the front door of the suspect's apartment. Sgt. Aranda then proceeded to the rear of the apartment where he observed Mr. Youngs run to Mr. Youngs' 1977 Chevy pickup truck which was parked eastbound on Olympic Boulevard. Sgt. Aranda had been previously advised the suspect's vehicle was a blue pickup truck.

Sgt. Aranda ran to the left side of the truck just as Mr. Youngs started the engine. Sgt. Aranda drew his weapon and illuminated the interior of the truck with his flashlight. Sgt. Aranda ordered Mr. Youngs to "Freeze!" Mr. Youngs then turned and jerked the steering wheel to the left while he revved his engine and engaged it in gear. The vehicle lunged at Sgt. Aranda who jumped backwards nearly losing his balance in the traffic lane of the public street. Fearing for his safety and life, Sgt. Aranda fired one round at the moment the vehicle was coming towards him.

The shot was fired from a distance of approximately one and one-half feet from the driver's door of the pickup truck.

The bullet entered the rear of the truck cab, driver's side, approximately five inches from the outer edge of the cab and four inches above the top edge of the truck bed. The bullet traveled through the cab, apparently grazing the front and bridge portion of Mr. Youngs' nose as he had apparently turned his head to his right as the bullet entered the cab. The bullet traveled through the cab upward and to the right, going through the passenger sun-visor striking the metal roof and fell to the floorboard by the passenger door where a fragment of the bullet and its copper jacket were found by deputies immediately following Mr. Youngs' arrest.

Following the firing of his service revolver, Sgt. Aranda saw the blue pickup driven by Mr. Youngs collide with another pickup as Mr. Youngs was attempting to drive away in the number two traffic lane. Further, Sgt. Aranda observed Deputy Jones to his rear fire a shot in the direction of the departing pickup truck.

Deputy Lee Jones related he observed Sgt. Aranda stagger back or jump back from the vehicle when Sgt. Aranda was standing slightly ahead of the driver's door. This occurred just as the deputy heard the sergeant state, "Sheriff's Department, freeze!" The suspect looked at the sergeant at this moment, turned the steering wheel towards Sgt. Aranda and accelerated the pickup truck towards Sgt. Aranda who fired one round at the cab of the vehicle as he staggered back. Deputy Jones further stated that from his position of 10 to 12 feet to the right rear portion of the bed of the pickup truck, he fired a round at the right rear tire of the suspect's vehicle. Deputy Jones did not know at this moment whether or not Sgt. Aranda was hit by the truck. Following this the vehicle struck another vehicle but the suspect's vehicle continued eastbound on Olympic whereupon Mr. Youngs was pursued. He was eventually stopped and arrested at the location of Whittier Boulevard and Taylor Avenue in the City of Montebello following a high-speed chase by Sheriff's deputies in their marked Sheriff's vehicles.

Based on the series of events outlined hereinabove, it is clear that Sgt. Aranda was placed in a position of impending peril by the actions of Mr. Youngs.

It is equally clear that no reasonable and objective fact-finder would convict Sgt. Aranda of any crime in connection

with the firing of his service revolver under the circumstances. This is based on the fact that Sgt. Aranda apparently fired his weapon in the lawful exercise of his right to self-defense against an apparent attempt by Mr. Youngs to inflict death or serious bodily injury on the person of Sgt. Aranda.

The Sheriff's personnel directly involved in this incident demonstrated professional discipline in their confrontation with Mr. Youngs who ignored a lawful order to stop his vehicle.

Our file is closed in this case.

Very truly yours,

JOHN K. VAN DE KAMP
District Attorney

By Dennis E. Whelan

DENNIS E. WHELAN
Deputy District Attorney

sp

cc: Sgt. Michael Aranda, #[redacted]